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Elements of Success in the Medical Profession.

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INTRODUCTORY LECTURE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE STUDENTS OF THE

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

OF

OF THE
CITY LIBRARY,

MANCHESTER, N. H.

BOWDOIN COLLEGE,

FEBRUARY 21, 1867.

BY THEODORE H. JEWETT, M. D.,

Professor of Obstetrics and Diseases of Women and Children.

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BRUNSWICK, May 6, 1869.

PROF. JEWETT:—*Dear Sir*,—At a meeting of the students of the Maine Medical School held this day, it was voted to solicit for publication a copy of your introductory address, delivered at the commencement of the course of lectures in 1867.

Respectfully yours,

WM. H. BRAGDON, }
WM. S. HOWE, } *Committee.*
GEO. M. FROST, }

SOUTH BERWICK, May 12, 1869.

GENTLEMEN,—I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your note of May 6th, requesting a copy of my introductory address for publication. The address is at your disposal, and I remain, with my best wishes for your prosperity and success,

Sincerely yours,

THEO. H. JEWETT.

Messrs. W. H. Bragdon, W. S. Howe, Geo. M. Frost, Committee of Class of 1869.

LECTURE.

GENTLEMEN OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL :

You are entering upon a profession ancient and honorable. It is open to all men. Its ranks are filled with every variety of character. It is a race where some succeed, where many fail. The goal is before you. The rewards are rich for those who win. To the victor alone belongs the crown. What shall be your position? I answer, one eminently satisfactory if merited upon your part. "After many, many years of thoughtful observation," says Richard Sharpe, a distinguished English writer, "I can truly say, that nearly all those who began life with me have succeeded, or failed as they deserved." You have each something to do. We should not ask God to bless that which costs us nothing. We have no right to expect a rich crop where we have plowed no ground, sown no seed, and laid out no labor. I have thought it proper, gentlemen, upon this occasion, introductory to the course, to call your attention to some suggestions as to the elements of success in the medical profession. There are elements of success in all departments of life. All things do not happen by chance. Prosperity and adversity are not altogether the sport of fortune. I would remark, then, first, in order to success, you should possess a decided inclination for the profession. Many men are misplaced in this world. Accident, circumstances, surely not fitness or discretion, determined the choice. Many men, of fine abilities, have mistaken their vocation. Many clergymen would have made better merchants, some soldiers abler literary men, many

artists better agriculturists. Few men find their proper sphere. A man that has no fondness for his profession will never become well educated in it. If its studies are uninviting, there will be but little application. His information will be but meagre and imperfect. When he enters upon its duties, his attention to his patients will be irksome and marked by inconstancy. His labors will exhibit a want of efficiency and thoroughness. His practice will be limited. No advances or improvements will be made by him. He will always be behind the age. A physician who shuns his profession, who is more happily engaged with music, with literary pursuits, with pleasure, with politics, or anything else, is not the right man in the right place. He has spent his spring-time to no purpose, misdirected his talents, thrown away his chances for life, is a cipher in his calling, and a sad failure. That man alone who enthusiastically loves his profession, who is at home in it, and at home nowhere else; who is thoroughly satisfied and contented with it; who improves himself, makes progress, and attains rank; who wastes not his time in dreams or irregular efforts in other pursuits; who cheerfully performs his duties and develops his powers; who is ever earnestly on the advance,—this man alone will be successful.

Gentlemen, you have each chosen your profession. What will you do in it? Again I ask, what shall be your position? Shall it be one of honor and eminence, or one of obscurity? The majority of men move no further or faster than circumstances or necessity compel. You must take a step beyond such. “The profession is full *below*,” as was once said of the law, “but there is room enough *above*.”

This leads me to my second suggestion. In order to success, high professional attainments are necessary. Truly no profession embraces so wide a field. It is no wonder that the view of it often discourages.

The physician should understand the leading principles of the science, the great truths of anatomy, physiology, and pa-

thology ; of medicine, surgery, obstetrics, chemistry, and materia medica, as obtained from the best authors and leading minds ; also, from lectures, from hospitals, and clinical observations. He should understand that diseases are not entities, but disordered conditions of the system, of function, and nutrition. He should fully know what diseases are constitutional, and what local ; what are organic, and what functional ; what are owing to irritability of tissue, and what to inflammation ; what are affections of the nervous centers, solids, and what of the fluids ; what are dependent upon noxious taints of the blood as germs or sources of mischief, and what to the peculiar diathesis, whether cancerous, syphilitic, tuberculous, or otherwise. He should appreciate what disorders are curable, and what incurable ; what are self-limited, and what tend to destruction ; those that may be trusted to nature, those that must be let alone, and those that require the aid of careful treatment. He should discriminate between those which are symptomatic and those which are idiopathic. Reflex actions, also, demand the most thorough study and the vicarious action of organs. The causes of disease constitute a vast field of inquiry, and should be properly estimated in reference to treatment in all their bearings, as originating, modifying, and impressing disease. By timely appreciating these causes and removing patients from their operation, medication is often rendered unnecessary. The physician must know the influences of sex, of conformation, of hereditary predisposition, of excitement or exhaustion of the vital principle, particularly the latter ; of habits of life, of occupation, of temperament, of idiosyncrasy, of light, of darkness, of variations of temperature, of the seasons, of the atmosphere, of electrical conditions, of moisture, of terrestrial emanations, of the epidemic constitution of diseases, of diet, of excess or defect of exercise, of officious or too long-continued medication, and of many other agencies connected with life and its integrity.

Man, however, has a moral, a mental, as well as a physical being. All these are involved in disease. Man is a unit, although thus possessed of a manifold nature. We cannot look upon one part and forget the rest. Our complex nature acts and reacts one part upon another, in varied, endless, and unaccountable changes. Most of the phenomena connected with disease are abnormal. As physicians, we have not to deal with the race in its original perfection. Far from it. Man is a ruin ; everything works to disadvantage. We all know the disturbing and depressing effects of disease upon our mental and moral parts. The agency, however, of the mind and feelings upon the physical organization is not so generally comprehended. How many cases of disorder are occasioned by overstudy with the young. What sad effects follow undue emulation and ill-timed and inordinate excitement of the brain. Parallel cases are seen in every stage and walk of life, connected with business and financial operations. In the family, too, how many instances present themselves of feeble, broken women, wasted in vital power, relieved by no changes from a dull routine, and the depression of an endless, tame monotony. The moral influences connected with disease as causes are innumerable. They are seen in connection with puberty, menstruation, marriage, and all the life of woman ; in the reverses of commercial men, in morbid religious states, and in all the successes and disappointments of life. The relations which exist between the emotions and the viscera, through the sympathetic system of nerves, is a large field for study. The diagnosis of disease calls for close attention, for patient, untiring study and observation. Passing over its extensive range, we need simply to suggest its bearing as to latent affections. What rare ability is requisite for the detection of some forms of chronic meningitis ; also of lesions of the cerebral substance, of obscure spinal affections, of paralytic manifestations, of incipient phthisis, of old pleurisy with slight effusions ; affections of the heart,

aneurisms of the aorta, diseases of the kidneys, enlargements of the ovaries, uterine tumors, atrophy of the liver, ulcerations of the intestinal canal, and many organic difficulties unaccompanied by significant external manifestations. Therapeutics, or the wise application of remedies to the treatment of disease, is a branch of the first importance. Here you may, here you must be students and earnest inquirers and observers throughout all your coming years. You must know the primary properties of medicinal agents. You must also understand the methods by which remedies act, whether direct or general, through the brain and nervous centers primarily, or whether locally or on organs by absorption or by revulsion; whether as stimulants or as sedatives, as chemical or as mechanical agents.

Again; you must appreciate the circumstances which modify therapeutical indications. In the same affection the same remedy may do harm and may do good in different patients, and in the same patient at different times. You must understand that no medicine has constant, positive results, and that the most opposite effects may be obtained from the same remedy, as we see opium now a stimulant and now a sedative, at one time acting as an astringent, and at another as a cathartic. You must fully realize that medicines are not to be used routinely for this or that complaint with every patient; but relatively, as meeting and suiting the conditions present in any case under treatment. In a word, the proper use of remedies is their rational use, based upon physiologico-pathological considerations.

I have called your attention, gentlemen, very briefly to the field of study before you. Volumes without number have been devoted to each department of it; many more will be written. The ablest minds of centuries have been engaged in the task. He alone who stands by the bedside of suffering humanity, with the lives of fellow mortals in his hands, and considers the momentous issues to the patients and their

families depending solely upon his decisions and acts, can fully realize the importance and responsibility of his office, the greatness of the work, and the poverty of his qualifications.

How shall these attainments be made? How shall this knowledge be secured? I answer, not by supposing you possess it; not by being supposed to have it; not by simply wishing for it; not by solely intending to possess it; not by ending your efforts with your preparatory studies. It is a habit with many, indeed with most men, after a little labor to rest satisfied for a season. Nature disposes to ease. This is the case with student life, when study is wearisome, and the use and practical application of medical knowledge is in the remote distance. Present incentives to diligence are few, certainly not pressing or urgent, and many a task is deferred for a more convenient season. The same is also true as to the recent graduate. With the end of the preparatory course, I need not say, close the hours of study forever of many a medical man. A young gentleman receives his diploma. He has finished his studies; *finished* them, in many instances, and enters upon practice. He is self-confident, self-satisfied. He knows more than he ever did before, or ever will know again. Gentlemen, what does the young physician know? Is there any basis for self-assurance? What is the extent of his knowledge? I answer, next to nothing. When he receives his diploma, he simply has been informed as to his duties. He has only been shown the fields to be explored. In reality, his life as a student has but just begun. He has been taught how to study and what to investigate. The work, however, the great limitless work of intelligent, useful, practical study and observation lies wide and untouched before him. The same indisposition to close application is the rule with the practitioner of years. His various cares and duties naturally present themselves as excuses for indolence and neglect of study. He can find no time, he is weary, his active life

has broken up studious habits. He is apt to study only from a pressing emergency. He thinks that he has few occasions for his books, that the special cases requiring light are rare. He thinks, perhaps, when at leisure he will study more. He makes few improvements, he heeds not the advances of others. Thus life passes. The man rusts. In a few years he is a fossil. Not many physicians reach a higher station than mediocrity. Do you wonder at this? Would not the fact be very wonderful if they did? Gentlemen, few men, I say, attain eminence. They never mean to. The intention never enters their mind. They desire the rewards, but neglect the means thereto.

But to return, what are the conditions essential to high attainments? I answer, not simply great privileges. Opportunities and advantages are of but trifling importance, if not appreciated and employed.

Again I answer, not genius. There is a vast difference in men as to the ease of acquisition and powers of research. We see it in childhood, as well as in maturer life. The men of genius, however, do not always shine as the lights and ornaments of the profession. Far from it. Most of those who attract attention at the start, end eventually with an inglorious career. Those from whom the world has hoped the most, have disappointed the most. Their facility for knowledge was so great, that like children born to wealth, the possession was undervalued. Such individuals rely so much upon their powers, as to relax their efforts and dissipate their time. Their course is marked by inconstancy of effort, and thus they lose the laurels. It is not the tree that blooms profusely and sheds its blossoms that men most value, but the tree that yields the fruit. Some of the ablest men of this and other countries have not been remarkable for uncommon genius or natural talents, but have been remarkable for industry. What are, then, the essentials to high professional attainments? I answer, a resolute determination to

succeed, coupled with earnest, unflinching, untiring perseverance,—men who do great things, not those who dream of them. Such, and such alone, are the successful men, the men of mark in this world; such alone the men of true genius,—*Possunt quia posse videntur*—“Those men can be able who think they can be.” He who resolves not, seldom acts. He who never resolves to do great things, most surely will not do them. He who does resolve to do much, will accomplish more than he who makes no resolves at all. “He who thinks well of himself,” says Dr. Johnson, “will not always be mistaken. He will attempt something, and, if he fails, will fail with honor. He that has no hopes of success will make no attempts, and where nothing is attempted, nothing will be done. Every man should entertain a favorable opinion of the powers of the mind, which are in every man greater than they appear, and might, by cultivation, be exalted to a degree beyond what their possessor presumes to believe. Power is never far from necessity. Scarce a man but has found, at the instigation of necessity, that he has been able to do what in a state of leisure he deemed impossible; and some of our species have signalized themselves by such achievements, as prove that there are few things above human hope.” “Many things are impossible,” says an old writer, “to some only through the weakness of the means whereby they seek to attain them.” Many men live without aim or end, great or small, with no settled purpose, mere lookers-on in life, dreamers, drifting down the stream of life, forgetful of the importance of the present moment, blind to its relations to the future, their course and progress solely governed by the force of varying circumstances. Such men fail, and yet complain of their ill-fortune. Of them I would say, as did old Thomas Fuller, “The house of correction is the fittest place for those whose legs are lame by their own laziness.” He who wishes to reach some high elevation and resolves to do so, and earnestly labors to ascend the dizzy

path, will alone plant his feet upon the summit. In vain may a man trust to fortune for success,—fortune helps those who help themselves. Effort, then, and perseverance must follow good resolutions. The latter are of no account without the former. Indeed, the value of the good things of this world consists mainly in the labor and the development of the abilities brought into exercise through which they have been obtained,—more so, perhaps, than in the ends themselves. Men sacrifice their future hopes to present ease or gratification,* yield their higher to their inferior nature, and trust to their wits to meet emergencies. No class of educated men is so characterized by such neglect of regular, progressive improvement, as physicians. Their reading is varied, irregular, and desultory, without any special plan or purpose. There can be, therefore, in general, but few important investigations conducted to a successful termination, or advances made in science. If they read at all, they are readers, not students; instead of being leaders, most are followers. Now no man can retain even past information, and preserve it fresh for use by such a course, much less make valuable additions to the common stock of the profession. He cannot either preserve the status of his mental powers, much less develop his mind, enlarge its grasp, or sharpen his faculties. The best way to get more talents is to employ faithfully those we have. He who does not continuously exercise his faculties, and oftentimes to the utmost, by tasks and labors increasing in importance with the development of his abilities, will dwarf and dwindle, and grow feeble rather than strengthen. The same laws hold good with the mental as the physical powers. How many practitioners settle in the first favorable opening in localities of small population, obtain sooner or later the practice of the place, become satisfied with their position, accommodate themselves to the small demands of their patrons, have nothing to arouse their energies, form habits of indolence, from which they never recover, gauge

themselves and are rated by others by their surroundings, and rust.

This ought not so to be. Gentlemen, is this to be your lot? I trust not. Every medical man should pursue a systematic course of study for life. He should have his hours for study. He should form the habit, and so continue it, as not to be otherwise satisfied. If he does not establish such a habit he will become a loose thinker, and an inefficient practitioner. No man can study without a motive,—an object. The physician should always have some subject, therefore, before him for investigation. He should look over the field and select a topic for consideration. Thus, at one time he may devote himself to a branch of former studies as to which he would refresh his mind; at another, he consults the best authors as to some sudden emergency. Again; he is interested in some new contribution to medical science, or he may occupy his leisure hours as to the importance of certain views and their elaboration, which have been suggested to him from his practice. As to the latter, there is work and study enough for a lifetime. A large amount of necessary and important information is not to be obtained from preparatory studies. When settled in practice, you are not to follow the beaten track of the profession. Many young practitioners imagine that here lies their interest and duty. If you follow authors ever so closely, even the highest authorities, take my word for it, you will make poor medical men. The books are generally a quarter of a century behind the age, compilations of various articles published at various periods, perpetuating the dogmas of bygone years. Why, you might as well think of going to the polls at an important contested election, and base your action upon the political views and notions of newspapers of twenty-five years since, as to parties and measures, as to undertake to practice strictly according to medical text-books.

Gentlemen, I wish you to have a right understanding of this whole matter. From the standard books you should ob-

tain the leading truths of the profession. In addition to this, however, you should ever be alive to, and familiar with, the current medical information of the age and the hour in which you live. You should also be untiring and careful observers of the great book of nature, whose pages are constantly opening before you in your practice. Here is ample room for thought, for investigation, for the possession of the most valuable knowledge. Here opens a wide opportunity for you to become strong and able men. In this field you may, if you choose, become profound thinkers, and practical benefactors, not only to the community, but to the profession. There is no reason why every well-educated physician should not contribute the most important additions to the common stock, from his individual sphere of labor. Extensive reading and study, then, both as to the productions of the press from living writers, whether in the journals, retrospects, or new issues of volumes, coupled with personal investigations in the sick-room, and meditations, records, and labors in the study, should be regarded by all practitioners as the chief elements of professional vigor, growth, and usefulness. The type of diseases is continually changing, and he who is out of business a short time, or who if in business is not wholly intent upon, and wholly engrossed by its claims, is not to be trusted as a safe and reliable physician. Take, for example, the treatment of almost any acute affection, and what are the directions given by the old text-books?

Why, first, 'last, and always, venesection, leeches, antiphlogistic measures. Now ask any sensible practical, physician, if he follows such rules, and what will be his reply? And yet I frequently consult with well-educated men who religiously follow the old text-books. Stiff, self-opinionated men, who are unsuccessful, who always will be, and yet who wonder that their practice is so limited.

Gentlemen, the public are better satisfied to have their friends recover, than to have them die, although treated

according to the rules. The subject is easily illustrated. Take, for example, congestion of the brain. In one instance you use venesection, leeches, antiphlogistic measures, revulsive cathartics. These measures are imperatively required. Here you find a sanguineous temperament, a strong constitution, and a sthenic affection. In another patient we have, it is true, great heat of head, intolerance of light, and other symptoms peculiar to the disorder; but he also has an enfeebled constitution, prostration from overwork of brain and body; and, in connection, we see small furunculi scattered over the body. What shall be your treatment? Shall we bleed him? Shall we reduce him? Do it, and the man dies. Give him tincture of iron and restoratives, and he lives. And will the head become cool, and the intense restlessness be allayed by such measures? I answer, yes; even where cold lotions and bladders of ice cannot allay the phlogosis, and the scalp is steaming with such applications. Take pneumonia, as an example. One case does well with depletory measures. You visit another. The symptoms are much the same; rapid pulse, tight, incessant cough, great restlessness, and oppression of breathing, with pleuritic pains. Shall he receive the same treatment as the first? No; give him whisky, beef tea, tincture of iron, and touch the throat with a linctus of creosote and gum arabic. Why is this treatment unlike the former? Simply because we observe patches of diphtheria in the fauces. And will such measures loosen the cough? I answer, that the expectoration will be loose in a few hours. Such coughs never soften under venesection, antimonials, veratrum, viride, and like measures. In another case, characterized by vigilant and continued wakefulness, you must give opium. If the man is not thoroughly quieted and sleep secured he cannot live.

Again; there are aggravating and harassing coughs, without perhaps acute fever, where you must direct your attention to the liver; or, in other cases, we have dry incessant coughs

of long continuance, where anodynes, or the most devoted attention to the lungs is not of the least avail. Here proper regard to an inflamed and ulcerated cervix uteri will relieve your patient of all her troubles.

Again; you must know, and you can only know by your own observation in practice, based upon sound knowledge, when prostration is idiopathic, requiring restorative measures, or when debility is symptomatic and consecutive, the result of local chronic ailments, only to be removed by attention to the latter.

Lastly; you must especially understand those cases and their management where, although local affections exist, the general constitution requires the chief attention, and that of support. Here, by reason of the extreme delicacy and exquisite nervous sensitiveness of the cerebro-spinal system, as well as the great sympathetic disorders of the organs is unreasonably and unduly magnified, the physician often led astray, and excessive and ill-directed medication exhibited. Thus, in abscess of the breast, tincture of bark is worth more than all local treatment, as such affections only occur in feeble habits. But we will not enlarge, although the subject invites us on.

I have only to say, gentlemen, that as you enter upon practice, each goes to his own field of labor; each one will be an observer and student by himself; each will see forms of disease, epidemic as well as special cases, that no other will or can. Here every one must act for himself, depend upon his own eyes, ears, touch, and brain. Analyze your cases, ascertain first the type of diseases for the locality current at the time. Sound thoroughly the general conditions, and, lastly, the prominent points of each individual case before you. In your treatment, carefully suit your remedies to the occasion. You must not neglect the general conditions to attend to the symptoms. Often attention to the former comprises your whole work; neither wholly neglect the symptoms, to attend

to the general features. You must be live men, thinking, studious, reflecting men, never prescribing for a name, never wedding yourself to routine. Be independent observers and reasoners, always remembering that each case is a study by itself, and that one is no positive rule for another. Thus alone can you come to have proper faith in medicine, without which you cannot use aright the fruits of the experience of others, or make proper advances yourself, or be useful. Thus only can you be practical men, unlike many who are good theorists, excellent scholars, and learned men, without ability to successfully apply their knowledge, ineffective and undecided in trying emergencies requiring the highest executive abilities. Thus only can you fulfill your duties acceptably to the public, thus alone attain the highest professional elevation and reputation. The mind of the physician should ever be at work. Keep your thoughts upon your profession. The most brilliant ideas, the most novel, the most important suggestions, the most profound discoveries have generally come to those, and those only who have been enthusiastically absorbed in some special branch of study. Sir Isaac Newton, when asked how he was able to make such wonderful discoveries in science, replied, "by always thinking about them." Concentration, therefore, earnest application and perseverance are the foundation stones of eminence. All that excites the wonder and astonishment of the world in art or intellectual effort here has its origin. "The stately temple, with massive pillars and frowning battlements and lofty towers, impressive in its grandeur, was once a rude mass of stone." The sculptures of the great masters that have pleased and entranced mankind for ages were once rough marble. The productions of the pencil that have charmed and delighted generations, making the canvas to live with forms of grace and beauty forever; or, bringing us face to face with statesmen and poets and philosophers, and the great captains and leading spirits of other times; or with nature, as seen in the majesty of mountain

scenery, the repose of the woodlands ; or with ocean in her changes,—these *all* cost labor and life-long devotion.

Sir Isaac Newton said that he did not consider that he had any advantage over other men, except that whatever he thought of sufficient importance to begin, he had sufficient resolution to continue, until he had accomplished his object. Stephenson, the great engineer, who has done so much to alter the whole face of society, began life with this motto,—Persevere. Arago says, in his autobiography, that *his* master in mathematics was a word or two of advice, which he found in an old letter. Puzzled and discouraged by the difficulties he met with in his early studies, he was almost ready to give over the pursuit. It proved to be a short letter from D'Alembert to a young person, disheartened like himself as to his success in study, and who had written to him for counsel. "Go on, sir ; go on, sir," was the counsel which D'Alembert gave him ; "the difficulties you meet will resolve themselves as you advance. Proceed, and light will dawn and shine upon your path." "That maxim," says Arago, "was my greatest master in mathematics." Following out these simple words, made him the first astronomical mathematician of his age. To what eminence and honor might not many of our profession arrive, if when discouraged by ill-success, and ready to give over further efforts, this same maxim was adopted,—Go on, go on.

I pass to the consideration of another element of success,—social culture. As physicians, this subject commends itself to your attention. Your success in life depends not wholly upon your professional attainments. Your appearance, your manners, your powers of conversation, your ease of bearing, your ability of pleasing and interesting others, your knowledge of the usages of good society, your insight into human nature, your tact, your address, have much to do with your

advancement in life. The impression which you make upon the profession and the community is of the first importance. It will affect, may I not say it will determine, the circle of your acquaintance and the extent of your practice. Your intercourse with the profession should be marked by courtesy, by a strict regard to the feelings and rights of others, and by those enlarged and catholic principles, based upon justice, which are alike honorable to the highest self-respect and the dignity of the vocation. If you stand not well with your medical brethren, your position before the public will be doubtful and unsatisfactory.

As professional men, you desire to be known. In order to be widely known, it is necessary not that you repel all with whom you come in contact, but that you should widely please. Now men judge others by their external exhibitions before they know the internal qualities. If your general bearing is unacceptable, your worth will pass for little. Men can judge well of your appearance if not of your abilities, and you will have no opportunity to make the latter known to those to whom your presence is neither attractive or agreeable. First impressions govern the opinions of mankind. If unfavorable, further intercourse is at an end.

A physician's bearing should surely not be insulting; a supercilious, arrogant, censorious manner will not make your acquaintance desirable. Neither should it be disgusting; vulgarity, coarseness, and rudeness shock the good tastes of every one. It should not be negative; abstraction, a morbid shyness, an indisposition to communicate with others, will never bring you into notice. It should not be selfish; a determination to take the lead in every circle, to force your opinions upon all persons and all parties, to carry your purpose and points without regard to the feelings of others, is insufferable. It should not be indifferent; if you take no

interest in the welfare of those you meet, and appear heedless of their presence, or their likes or dislikes, your room will be preferable to your company.

Your life should be the reverse of all this. If you would please, show that you are pleased with others. Just as you act to others, so will they deport themselves toward you. All men are gratified with manifestations of regard. There are few but what are pleased with attention. All are willing to be loved and esteemed. "We should avoid, as far as possible, lowering others as to their own good estimation of themselves, especially when just, and it is far from wise unnecessarily to excite envy." Do as you would be done by. If you would be welcome in all societies, cause others to feel satisfied with themselves, and at ease in your presence, contribute your share always toward rendering any society agreeable. Make your intercourse with the world as much a study as your profession. Professional men generally regard an attention to externals as of trifling importance. So do not men in other departments of business. Those engaged in the trades and arts, in traffic, and in all the pursuits of busy life, know better. They are fully aware that there is no success without pleasing; that to invite and retain patronage, some exertion must be used, some attractions exhibited.

Shrewdness and tact and management are required in every calling. Impostors always endeavor to engage the interest of the world. It is their only capital. How well they succeed; what a lesson they read to men of real merit; why should we as a profession ignore all this? Indeed, affable and agreeable manners are of more consequence to educated men than to all others. As a class, the habits we form in the study are thoughtful rather than social, and in our retirement we devote our attention to the acquisition of knowledge rather than the laws of social intercourse and the sources of

popularity. An important branch of education is thus neglected. The latter can only be known and secured by intercourse with the world, not seclusion by daily practice, not from books. Many, therefore, especially those who have not enjoyed the advantages of society in early life, are poorly fitted to enter upon a professional career. They look for others to be interested in them, when they have nothing to interest others; they possess, perhaps, a good fund of knowledge, as far as science is concerned, but they have no knowledge of the world; they have read books, but they have not read men. "Reading," says Bacon, "makes a full man, and conversation a ready man." A learned man, ignorant of society, absorbed in his meditations, lives in a world of his own. He understands not others, neither is he understood. To the multitude his conversation is uninteresting and unappreciated, his presence a burden, and his absence a relief. No wonder many fail of eminence; it cannot be otherwise. They become discouraged with their own ill success, and vexed with the prosperity of their inferiors; they retire within themselves, lament too late their deficiencies and inaptness for social intercourse, and lower their aims for life, dissatisfied with all mankind. Such men have no one to blame but themselves. They have neglected the world, and are neglected by the world. "Praise is a debt." Those who pay the price for it can have it, none others,—"*Nihil est quod credere de se non possit.*" *

I have touched upon the importance of agreeable manners to the physician, in connection with an introduction to practice and the formation of an extensive acquaintance. Much might be said of the same as to retaining that acquaintance. The latter, however, is implied in the former. I leave this

* Juvenal.

subject simply remarking, that high social qualifications are closely connected with our own personal happiness, as well as our usefulness to others.

We are social beings, and in continual contact with each other. Our enjoyment and equipoise hold a near relation as to how we impress and are impressed. Our daily engagements as physicians should be marked by no friction, mingling as we do with all classes and conditions of men, and every variety of character. We should have a respect to the fitness of things as we find them, to propriety and decorum, and often to expediency, whether it regard place, time, occasion, or person. We should study the position, the habits, the turn, the peculiarities of all with whom we have to do, and make it our object to command the good-will and respect of every one. Our lives and deportment should be such that a cordial welcome will ever greet our presence. Just in proportion as we succeed in this direction will our visits yield pleasure to others, and to ourselves satisfaction. Our usefulness in the sick-chamber will be governed very much by our manner. Here, where all hearts soften and the finer traits of humanity find their proper occasions for exercise, the physician should not be wanting. Here should all his intercourse be marked by sound sense, by gentle kindness, and refined courtesy. To be acceptable and successful, we should possess an intimate and profound knowledge of the mental and moral nature of man, as well as the physical. The patient is placed in our hands. We must control and direct all that he is, all that belongs to him, for his restoration. We must remove all in relation to him that acts to his disadvantage. We must secure and employ in his favor all that will benefit. Sometimes it will be our duty to warn the sufferer as to errors of life, and give counsel as to reformation. Sometimes we must inspire with hope, and rouse the flagging pow-

ers. Now we must take command of the mind when prostrated and depressed by long illness, and cause the patient to forget and rise above his troubles, and encourage him to make such efforts as are essential to his restoration. And now, with delicate and kind attention, we minister to the last hours of the sufferer as he passes from earth.

You are entering, gentlemen, upon a professional life unlike any other. May you live as its ornaments, and ever be filled with its proper spirit. May words of kindness ever fall from your lips as you stand by the stricken and the fearful; and as their eyes, faint from infirmity and exhaustion, turn to yours for relief and salvation in their extremity, may they never look in vain.

Finally; high moral worth is to the physician an essential qualification to success. Entering upon a profession which has ever held a high place in the estimation of mankind; associated as it is with life, with death, with the most important interests, as well as the tenderest and holiest relations of man; penetrating as it does into the most secret privacies of all families, to every hearth and every altar; you are set apart from other men to a peculiar, may I not say, a holy vocation. In ancient days this was a sacred profession, and its members were regarded with love, with awe and veneration. How, therefore, does it become you, gentlemen, to approach it with clean hands, with pure hearts, with great self-respect, with high principles, with true dignity of character, with love to man, with reverence and fear toward God. This is due to yourselves, to the community, to the great brotherhood in whose ranks you move, and to that great Being whose favor and benedictions are essential to your success. The annals of medicine have been adorned by illustrious names in every age, to whom the world owes obligations as great or greater than to men of eminence in other departments. Their

achievements may have attracted more attention, and oftener called forth the acclamations of the multitude, in the appeals of the forum, or the exploits of the soldier ; but the success and good deeds of the physician have been of no less importance. Our usefulness lies in preserving the health and well-being of the people, in staying the advance of the pestilence, in insuring safety to those in terror, in relieving from suffering ; in restoring to the bosom of their families, to the walks of life, and to their duties, those who have been trembling upon the verge of destruction. The duties of the soldier in the defence of his country are unlike ours. His achievements are upon the battle-field, amid all the pomp and circumstance of war ; our victories are in the stillness of the sick-room.

“Honor the physician,” says the ancient text, “with the honor due to him, for the Lord hath created him ; that his skill shall lift up his head, and in the sight of great men he shall be had in admiration.” We live in an age, gentlemen, when it is more than ever incumbent upon us to honor our profession. Urged on by selfishness and the love of gain, the world swarms with pretenders with no foundations for their claims save those of boldness and assurance. It becomes us, therefore, as the representatives of skill and education, as the guardians of medical science and its honor, to separate ourselves widely from impostors. We should so distinguish ourselves and our organization, that we shall be known by all men as the embodiments of true wisdom, commanding their respect not only for our perfection of attainments, but also for excellence and elevation of character. We should be men of truth and sincerity, in whom there is no guile. We should be men characterized by conscientiousness and transparent honesty, fairly and honorably dealing with all who come under our care. We should never unreasonably raise the hopes or expectations of any one, nor unnecessarily inflict

pain in the prosecution of our engagements. Our lives should be such that all can readily repose full confidence in us, and commit their dearest and most sacred interests to our care. We should be men of benevolence, for our own sake and for that of others; our best practice is with the poor. Here, untrammelled, we act from the inspiration of the moment, and here arise our most valuable suggestions. Indirectly, successful cases redound to our advantage, and we are as much blessed as the receiver. With the unfortunate, the young practitioner must commence his practice. Our pecuniary gains may, in this direction, be less perhaps than with the wealthy. The practice, however, in this field leads to the other. Besides all this, I am confident that we receive our recompense. A poor widow's blessing is worth as much as a rich man's money. Boerhave said the poor were his best patients, for God is their paymaster, and he was sure of his reward. This world is full of sorrow, of trials and misfortune. The victims of vice, of sensuality, of incapacity, of misfortune, are on every hand. The sons and daughters of poverty are always with us, and we may do them good when we will. Here is full scope for all our better nature. To this field may we go at all hours. Here may we calm the raging delirium of the father wrestling in the strong grasp of fever, and raise him up again to the support of his destitute family. There, restore color to the cheek and strength to the pulses of the poor widow, the light of whose life is gone out forever. Now we may give comfort to the friendless orphan, and now speak encouragement to the despairing prodigal, rallying him to new efforts, to a better life. Where all men forsake, where few venture to come, the home of the afflicted and down-trodden, there is our post of duty. Gentlemen, this is a holy calling, a ministry of love, to which the angels would willingly come down and bear us company.

May our lives adorn our profession. May virtue ever go out from us wherever we pass, to cheer, to heal, and to bless mankind.

Again; it is by the possession of moral worth alone that we can confidently look for a positive and special blessing upon our labors. May we, as physicians, expect a special blessing upon our labors; or must we, with the custom of the times, refer all things to laws operating from necessity? If there is no blessing for *us*, we cannot look for any favor from Heaven, under any circumstances whatever. Then must we believe that God is indifferent to man in all his troubles, that the Bible is a fable, and the experience of mankind a fallacy. Does the instinct of all hearts in every age in times of suffering and agony, do the clasped hands, the tearful, uplifted eyes, the cry for help agree with this? Perish such a thought. Let us humbly acknowledge both a general and a special supervision of an overruling Providence. God is our father. He does pity his children. He knoweth our infirmities. He remembereth that we are dust. His beneficence and our necessities are but complements to each other. All feel this. Our very nature, every heart responds, amen! What manner of persons ought *we* to be, therefore, who stand by the bedside of the suffering? We who are the channels of God's favors, the ministers at his altars? Shall we, as a profession, proudly self-reliant, satisfied with our personal ability and the resources of science, exalt ourselves and scoff the idea of dependence, before Him who holds in his hands the issues of life? Is it wise, is it safe, to ignore him who is jealous of his honor, and will not give it to another? Shall we believe in no aid, wish for none, expect none, ask for none? When our Saviour came down from the mount of transfiguration he came to his disciples and saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. "And there

came to him a certain man kneeling down to him and saying, Lord, have mercy upon my son, for he is a lunatic, and sore vexed, for oftentimes he falleth into the fire and oft into the water, and I brought him to thy disciples and they could not cure him. Then Jesus rebuked the devil, and he departed out of him, and the child was cured from that very hour. And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, because of your unbelief. This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." What a lesson does this record read to us! The disciples of our Lord, who had received a full commission to go forth and heal all manner of sickness, to cleanse the lepers, to give sight to the blind, and to raise the dead, were unable to restore this child on account of their unbelief. Fasting and prayer were requisite to bring them into such a state, such a communication, as to render them acceptable to God as the medium of his blessing. What, I would ask, then, is the position of those in this day who, set apart to the cure of all manner of diseases, regard not their fitness or unfitness in the sight of God as the instrument of his blessings, who seek not his favor, and who look with contempt upon those who do. If special blessings may be granted from Heaven, can such men hope for them? If it is requisite to please the giver, will a repulsive bearing and a scornful spirit secure his favor? Are there not moral and spiritual laws or conditions to be observed, as well as physical, in order to the attainment of many important results? Is not prayer a causative act? May we not have power with God? May we not influence the first great cause, and effect results by coming into communication with Him in reference to our patients? May we not, as did Jacob of old, like princes prevail; and have power with God and man? May not all this be done in accordance with strict necessary law?

I think there is no doubt with any, that a dissolute life is inimical to high intellectual effort. It is equally evident that the perfection of our moral being is essential to the highest development of intellect. Why should we not regard these laws of our nature? We are subjects of God's government. Our success is dependent upon his favor, as well as what are termed secondary laws, and this may be a part of law upon moral elevation as well as intellectual. Let us believe this, and let our lives and efforts therewith agree. Great as have been our achievements as physicians, we may with his special blessing, itself based upon law, do greater things than these. No longer may we as a profession give occasion to the charge of atheism or infidelity. Let us not live like brutes, and like them die. Our moral part, the immortal and highest of our being, the possession of which distinguish us from all the inferior creation, should ever look upward and recognize the first great cause, that Great Sovereign to whom it holds the most intimate relations, and to whom it is responsible. With purity of heart, therefore, with perfect self-forgetfulness, in the exercise of the highest wisdom, regarding the laws of our being and the favor of God, associated as they ever are, let us humbly consecrate ourselves to the cause of humanity as servants in the great vineyard of God. Let us go about, as ministers of mercy, doing good, dispensing to the diseased and suffering kind offices, ever looking with earnest and reverential confidence for aid and for approval to the Great Master, who has left us an example that we should follow his steps.

I have thus noticed in turn some of the elements of success in the medical profession, namely ; a love for the profession, high attainments, social culture, and moral worth. May your lives, gentlemen, thus be eminently characterized. Then will you be more than conquerors, ruling yourselves, making

the most of yourselves, present ease being sacrificed for future good, your inferior nature being made subject to your superior, your whole being held under the government of a strong, inflexible will, directed by an enlightened conscience and an enlarged intelligence. Serve your times nobly and faithfully, ever regarding your accountability and fealty to God. Thus shall you prosper; thus shall success be yours; thus shall you be satisfied. You will have your own self-respect. You will have the regard of your fellow-men. God will honor you, and the light shall shine upon your ways.





